CREDIT CARD APPLICATION AUTOMATION SYSTEM

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A universal credit card system utilizes a portable card access device which stores

5   information associated with multiple bank card accounts, electronically authenticates a user of the bank card accounts, allows the user to select a particular one of the bank card accounts for usage, and then magnetically encodes the selected bank card account information on a separate card substrate (a "universal" credit card) and releasing the card for use. Bank card account information can be stored by inserting an existing bank card

10   into the access device and reading the existing bank card, by manually entering the information using a keypad, or by downloading the information from a computer directly to the card access device. Authentication may be performed using an optical fingerprint scanner. After use, the universal credit card is re-inserted into the card access device and the previously selected bank card account information is erased. The universal credit

15   card system may advantageously be used in conjunction with a credit card application automation system which can issue a new bank card with practically no wait time. The user enters application information into a local computer, which transmits the user application information to a host server via the Internet. Once approved, the host server sends new bank card account information to the local computer, and the local computer

20   can immediately download the information into the card access device, which then generates a universal credit card having the new bank card account information.